

PE GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. SCOPE

A.1 Evidence handling, examination, and case note procedures are covered in the Division Quality Assurance Manual (Section 4.13). Prevention of contamination is covered in the DNA Quality Assurance Manual (DNA QA 9) with the exception of sticky mats, which are not utilized in the Primary Examination Section. The following is a list of additional procedures specific to the Primary Examination Section.

B. QUALITY CONTROL

B.1 The Primary examination laboratory is separately keyed and is part of the secured facility of the Forensic Science Division at the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. Evidence examination (including evidence photography and microscopic examination) must be conducted at a separate time or in a separate space from DNA extraction, quantitation setup, and PCR amplification setup. The evidence examination area consists of three rooms that are physically separate from each other and from the DNA extraction and amplification rooms (Rooms 119/121/123).

B.2 The Primary examination laboratory will be cleaned with a bleach-based cleaner, e.g. Clorox Bleach Germicidal Cleaner, an approved substitute or 70% ethanol where appropriate on a monthly basis to decontaminate the area. Each examination work area will be wiped down with a bleach based-cleaner, e.g. Clorox Bleach Germicidal Cleaner, or approved substitute before and after each individual use.

C. SAFETY

C.1 Treat all biological samples as potentially infectious. Gloves, a face mask and a lab coat must be worn. Additionally, eye protection (e.g. safety glasses or a face shield) must be worn when appropriate.

D. REAGENTS, STANDARDS, AND CONTROLS

D.1 Bleach based-cleaner, e.g. Clorox Bleach Germicidal Cleaner, or approved Substitute (decontamination)

D.2 70% Ethanol (decontamination)

Document ID	Revision	Approval	Date Published
1590	8	Supervising Criminalist - Biology	12/19/2017 2:25:36 PM

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E. EQUIPMENT

Not applicable

F. PROCEDURES

- F.1 Each item of evidence should be adequately described. The description should include information such as color, brand/manufacturer, size, dimensions, general condition and any observed damage. A simple outer packaging description must be documented (e.g. Tape sealed manila envelope/TSME)
- F.2 An examination of the evidence will be completed visually and if appropriate with magnified light and/or alternate lighting. If no apparent physiological stains are observed this will be documented in the case notes (if applicable).
- F.3 The location of any relevant physiological stains should be identified. Sketches or photographs of the item can be used to illustrate the relative position of the stains and the location of any that are to be removed.
- F.4 The results of any presumptive testing on the stains shall be described in the case notes, on a sketch or on photographs, as well as on the item if possible.
- F.5 Presumptive testing of physiological stains that may prevent obtaining DNA results due to the limited sample size, will be deferred and documented.
- F.6 Cursory examinations for the presence of trace evidence, such as hairs are a part of primary examination. Information on other types of trace evidence observed to be associated with an item can aid an investigation (e.g. glass fragments). Where appropriate, trace evidence should be collected and placed into a secure container, which bears the laboratory number, date, examiner's initials, the item control number, and a brief description of the contents (i.e. possible glass fragments from shirt). The trace evidence collected shall be described in the case notes, and either repackaged with the original item or impounded as a new item.

G. INTERPRETATION GUIDELINES

Not applicable

G. REFERENCES

Not applicable

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